



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

25c a Year

Devoted to the
High-School-College
Entrance
Scholarship Fund

THE NEW YORK

LATIN LEAFLET

Entered at the Post Office in Brooklyn as second-class matter, October 29, 1900
Under the Act of March 3, 1879

25 Issues

Every Penny of
Every Subscription
goes into the
Scholarship Fund

VOL IV

BROOKLYN, NEW YORK, MAY 2, 1904

No 98

TRUSTEES OF THE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

ARTHUR S SOMERS, Ex-Commissioner of Education
NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER, College Entrance Examination Board
FREDERICK D MOLLENHAUER, Mollenhauer Sugar Refinery
JOHN H FINLEY, College of The City of New York

Fourth Annual Meeting of the Latin Club

The twelfth regular meeting and the fourth annual meeting of The New York Latin Club is called for Saturday, May 7th, at 12 M, in the Hotel Albert, corner of University Place and Eleventh Street, New York. Professor Knapp, of Columbia University, will address the club on the subject of "Vergil". All persons who are interested whether teachers of Latin or not, are cordially invited to be present. The plan is to serve luncheon (50 cents a plate for everybody) at 12 M promptly, so that there shall be no delay. The address will follow the luncheon, and adjournment will occur about 2 P M *thus leaving the afternoon still unbroken for those who attend.* Please send a postal card at once to the Sec'y, Mr A L Hodges, 309 W 101st, N Y, if you intend to be present, so that we may inform Mr Frenkel the proprietor of the hotel, how many to expect. *Please attend to this at once.*

The election of officers for the coming year will be held at this meeting.

H H BICE, *President*
A L HODGES, *Secretary*

MISCELLANEA SUPERSTITIOSA I

I Philoxenos fgm 2. 33 and 34: "sweetest is the sausage mixed of kid and lamb, a food beloved by the gods."

I feel inclined to see in this passage more than a mere enthusiastic outbreak of a gourmand. The tenor of the whole passage is decidedly parodistic, and there seems to be no good reason to abandon this conception for the two lines quoted above. In this connection a parallel taken from Horace gains a new interest. Serm. II 63-65 praise pork, beans and grits as the "cenae deum." I have pointed out

(Trans. Am Phil Ass XXVI 54) that these lines must be taken in connection with Ovid, Fasti VI, 181 ff, and a German food superstition of the sacred "Twelfth Night." The lines of Philoxenos would seem to point in the same direction for Greece.

2 One of the most interesting, if one of the most unenjoyable, authors of the later Roman Empire is the old gentleman, Marcellus of Bordeaux, commonly known as Marcellus Empiricus from his claim as to the empirical character of his compilation on medicine. From the notes to his work that during a long time have been accumulating in my desk, I give here a few, mostly in the hope that they may strike the eye of some fellow-worker in the too much neglected field of Ancient Superstition.

One of the peculiar phenomena in this field is what I should like to term "Superstition Superimposed." By this I understand the accretion of superstitious elements to healing processes which in themselves are perfectly rational. For example: a certain application "ad vetustas causas stomachi," which is nothing but a kind of mustard plaster, must be put on the stomach either "linteo" or "phoeniceo." Moreover, it must be so applied "ut adverso pectore cuiuslibet pueri tepefactum ponatur." Of course, the modern reader is at once reminded of the biblical story of King David in his old age (Reg. I 2f). The idea that bodily contact with uncorrupted youth bestows new vigor upon the old and ailing is, of course, widely spread everywhere. The "cuiuslibet"

may need one word of explanation: it is inserted to remove the usual restrictions put upon such youths, as the "patrimus-matrimus" requirement.

Other examples of superimposed superstition are found: M. E. XXI 106, XVIII 19. In the former, a medicine is made, quite rationally, of the "herba vettonica." But certain things are to be observed in gathering this herb: it must be done in the month of August, the plant must be lifted with seed and roots, and it must be taken without using iron, one of the best known superstitious precautions in herb gathering, and one which undoubtedly goes back to a very high age, when iron was still a comparatively new metal, and therefore not to be used in any religious performance. Similar precautions occur repeatedly in the botanical work of Theophrastus.

The second passage quoted above is still more interesting. For lameness of the shoulders a warm sponge is to be applied to the painful spot; very rational indeed. But why does our author add: the sponge must have been touched with a sword that has served to kill some person? Such lameness is called in German "Hexenschuss," the *touch of the witches*. Now, if we remember that cutting instruments, and especially swords that have been used for murder, are among the most efficacious means of breaking the influence of witchery, it becomes clear that we deal here with the same idea. Thus, up to very recent times, the superstitiously inclined hastened at every public execution to procure some of the things used by the executioner.

One more instance of superimposed superstition is probably to be found M. E. XX 78. Here digestion is aided by massaging the stomach. However, the massage would be

worthless, were it not accompanied by the following incantation: *Lupus ibat per viam, per semitam; cruda vorabat, liquida bibebat.* (Heim, *Incantamenta* No. 84). This is sympathy for fair, or as Heim puts it "similia similibus." But it is quite rational that the massage of the abdomen should induce peristaltic movements. Finally, Marcellus has given us an indication of the composite character of this prescription by adding to it the words: *physicum de experimento satis utile.*

3 The opposite process, the rationalization of an original superstition, belongs among the most interesting examples of historical development found in the book. M. E. XX 92 gives a very complex medicine for all kinds of stomach trouble. These are the closing words: *cum dederis, accipies mercedis quodcumque; multi enim, qui cito curati sunt, ingrati extiterunt, propter quod ipsum antidotum acharistum appellatur.*

It is evident that we deal here with an attempt to explain an existing rule, or to speak technically, with an aetiological explanation. For we remember at once numerous superstitions in which the "healer" is strictly forbidden to demand any fee whatsoever. If we wanted to become controversial, we might even cite very modern examples of this law. But in all these cases we find also the permission to *accept* whatever gift if offered by the grateful patient. It seems tempting, therefore, to explain *acharistum* not as "ungrateful" but as "without fee." The explanation, as given by Marcellus, was added at a time when the knowledge of the original meaning of the term had been lost. ERNST RIESS

NOTICE.

All money received for THE SCHOLARSHIP FUND will be acknowledged in No 100 of THE LEAFLET, May 14.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE